



NEWS RELEASE

MAINE DISTRICT OFFICE

Release Date: 3/24/04
Release Number: ME-04-16

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FRANKLIN SAVINGS BANK DESIGNATED AS SBA EXPRESS LENDER

Augusta, Maine -- Jeffrey Butland, New England Regional Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and Mary McAleney, Maine SBA District Director presented a Certificate of SBAExpress Designation to Franklin Savings Bank's Peter L. Judkins, Executive Vice President on March 23rd, 2004.

The *SBAExpress* program allows selected lenders to use their own forms, procedures, and analyses to process SBA loan applications on an expedited basis. "This is an easier loan product for borrowers and lenders to use," stated Butland. "With this simplified procedure, we hope Franklin Savings will be able to serve more small businesses and entrepreneurs," he added.

Based on 3rd quarter earnings, Franklin Savings Bank was ranked the strongest of Maine's banks by Weiss Ratings Inc. "We have a long-standing philosophy of running a very conservative, well-managed institution with great people and this *SBAExpress* designation will let us reach out to even more small businesses, create jobs and enhance our community", said Franklin Executive Vice President, Peter Judkins.

Franklin Savings Bank, headquartered in Farmington is a community bank with eight locations in the Western Maine foothills. Branch locations include; Rumford, Jay, Rangeley, Skowhegan, Wilton, Mexico and Mt. Blue.